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BSE 2.102

On Influence and Arms: A Conversation on Nuclear Deterrence Theory and Policy Development

Nuclear deterrence is not a formula. The theory of nuclear deterrence developed after World War II and during the Cold War. This theory evolved over time as technology, world events, leadership attitudes, and public opinion shaped the resultant policies and strategies. When the Cold War ended with the breakup of the former Soviet Union and the concomitant reduction in superpower tension, deliberate thought on nuclear deterrence all but disappeared from the national security agendas of many states. Today, as strategic competition and the growing threat of nuclear use by powers like Russia, China, Iran, or North Korea dominate the geopolitical conversation, how well does Cold War nuclear deterrence theory apply in today's more complex world?